

SENATE No. 2

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

ADDRESS OF HONORABLE FRANK G. ALLEN ON
THE OCCASION OF HIS ELECTION AS PRESIDENT
OF THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE SENATE,
JANUARY 3, 1923.

FELLOW SENATORS: You have declared, by vote, your choice of me as the presiding officer of this Honorable Senate.

The unanimity of your vote is very gratifying. It means to me something more than a signal compliment. It signifies, I trust, good-will and esteem, an honor which is greatly prized. It is moreover an evidence of that united purpose on your part to perform wholeheartedly the special duties devolving upon us and to uphold with unfaltering fidelity the laws and traditions of this Senate and of this Commonwealth, whose representatives we are.

In accepting, as I do, with appreciation and thanks, my election for the second time to this position of high public honor, I do so with a keen sense of humility for I am deeply conscious of the obligations and responsibilities which relate to its duties and

for which one must hold himself accountable. The degree of success and approval attained will depend very largely upon your counsel, co-operation and help. I covet, therefore, that full support which is so essential to the proper outcome of our labors.

We are assembled in this historic chamber to take the oath of allegiance to our country and our Commonwealth, thus qualifying as members of the Senate for the years of 1923 and 1924. Our purpose here is plain. We are to legislate so as to foster and develop all matters which make for the welfare of this Commonwealth, not for selfish ends, not for our individual constituencies alone, but for the people of the Commonwealth as a whole.

Although many of you are entering upon your first term in the Senate, you are all men of legislative experience. I cannot commend to you too strongly the policies of our Governor and especially his desire to have all matters of State handled with true economy and on a strictly "Pay-as-you-go" basis. I am sure I voice the sentiments of every one of you in pledging to Governor Cox our assistance in carrying out those policies inaugurated by him during his last term and which resulted not only in lowering the State tax but also in very substantially reducing the State debt.

A close and friendly working relation between both branches of the General Court is absolutely essential to carry out effectively the policies of the Governor and to secure the proper solution of our problems.

An important part of our legislative work must be

performed in the committee room. Allow me to suggest that you conduct your public meetings so that all those appearing before you are accorded a full and fair hearing with equal consideration and courtesy toward all. Have your executive sessions while matters are still freshly in mind and report measures back to the Legislature as soon as possible after full and careful deliberation. Only in this way will it be possible to expedite our work and permit of a shorter session without in any sense neglecting or slighting our duties.

In dealing with the questions which come before us we shall achieve a greater degree of success if we pursue the same business-like methods we follow in the conduct of our private affairs. We should scrutinize carefully all proposed legislation, and particular care should be given to those measures which call for the expenditure of the public money. Massachusetts can well afford to have all things that are properly needed, and while we must keep expenses within reasonable bounds, we should see to it that no injustice is done any deserving cause. We should charge ourselves to see that everything possible is done for those who are inmates of our institutions, afflicted either physically or mentally, and, if anything, in such appropriations err on the side of liberality.

The way to save money is not to spend it. Needless expense should not be tolerated. By such a course alone will we reduce our debts, and our debts must be reduced.

Let us cultivate a disposition to legislate less by endeavoring to pass only measures that are essential. By so doing, we shall give our people time to acquaint themselves with existing laws.

In the world at large confusion reigns. Representative government is on trial. Lessons of grave import are before us which, if heeded, will teach us to treasure as never before the principles of our free government. Let us see to it that the institutions built up at such sacrifice and cost by our forbears are preserved unimpaired.

Massachusetts ever has stood foremost in the adoption of progressive and humanitarian legislation.

Let the laws of our Commonwealth be worthy of her traditions, that from her example the nation may gather new inspiration and increased devotion to the cause of righteous government.